



# GCD: Governor's Council on Disability



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[Governor's Council on Disability](#)

## GCD names Annual Award Winners

by Claudia Browner

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The [Governor's Council on Disability \(GCD\)](#) has selected the award winner and honorable mention of the **28th Annual Inclusion Award** and the **7th Annual Youth Leadership Award**.

The Inclusion Award and one Honorable Mention are presented annually to recognize private and public employers, individuals, and organizations that have successfully included people with disabilities in education, employment, housing, leisure activities, and website accessibility.

**The 2019 Inclusion Award winner is Artists First, St. Louis and the Honorable Mention goes to BCI Skills Center, St. Peters.**

For more information on the [Inclusion Award](#) winners, visit <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/inclwin.htm>

The annual Youth Leadership Award and one Honorable Mention are presented to recognize an outstanding Missouri youth (age 16-26) with a disability that has demonstrated exemplary leadership by making a difference in their community.

**The 2019 Youth Leadership Award winner is Annie Donnell and the Honorable Mention goes to Dylan Farmer.**

For more information on the [Youth Leadership Award](#) winners, visit <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/youthleadershipaward.htm>



The awards presentation to the winners had to be postponed, but will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

## GCD publishes Accessible Parking PSA

by Claudia Browner

### Accessible Parking PSA



Have you seen people park illegally in accessible parking spaces? Have you seen access aisles blocked by vehicles, shopping carts, or snow? Have you had trouble find accessible parking because of the misuse of parking spaces or access aisles by other individuals?

The Governor's Council on Disability has recently published a public service announcement to raise awareness about the importance of saving accessible spaces and access aisles for those who really need them in order to enjoy equal access.

Check out the [Accessible Parking PSA](#) online at <https://youtu.be/4OpEtjbNhgA>

## MO-YLF Alumni Spotlight on Dylan Farmer

by Rachel Rackers



In July of 2015, Dylan Farmer attended the [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) (MO-YLF), a leadership program for students with disabilities. Shortly after attending MO-YLF, Dylan started college at Maryville University to pursue his Bachelor's degree in History with a minor in Writing and Communications. In May of 2019, Dylan graduated with a near perfect GPA. Then in August, he started full time employment with the National Archives and Records Administration as a Customer Service Archives Technician.

Dylan is a great advocate for himself and other people with disabilities. He worked very hard around campus to abolish many barriers for himself and future students. When Dylan first got to campus as a freshman, there were only two accessible bathrooms on campus—one of which was for use by women only. Dylan saw a need for change and became involved in Maryville's student group called ABLE, a student-led group focused on disability rights, awareness, and accessibility. Together, Dylan and other members advocated for hands free or electronic accessible doors to most bathrooms for all buildings on campus. He also successfully advocated for an accessible sidewalk to a building commonly used for student gatherings.

During his time at Maryville, Dylan worked in the Student Service Center and the Office of Student Life. He completed internships at Salem United Methodist Church and the National Archives and Records Administration. He also served on Maryville's Accessibility Committee as the only student representative. Also, he wrote for Pawprint, which is Maryville's campus newspaper. Dylan's involvement extended off campus too. He volunteered at the Missouri History Museum and Library. Along with being a member of the Disabled Athlete Sports Association (DASA).

Dylan is a prime example for other youth with disabilities, to show them that they can do whatever they put their mind to. He has accomplished a lot and advocated for many things. There is no doubt that Dylan will continue to be a great leader, advocate and mentor in all that he does.

Dylan was nominated for the 2019 [Youth Leadership Award](#) and was selected as the Honorable Mention recipient.

## GCD Program Updates

by Claudia Browner

Due to the current COVID-19 situation, most schools are closed and students are completing their coursework from home.

To give students more time to complete applications for the [Missouri Youth Leadership Forum](#) and the [Leadership Development Program for Deaf/Hard of Hearing](#), the Governor's Council on Disability has extended the application deadlines for both programs into April. At this time, we are moving forward with planning these programs. Please stay tuned for updates as they become available.

If you have any questions about the programs, please contact our staff at 573-751-2600 or [gcd@oa.mo.gov](mailto:gcd@oa.mo.gov)

**APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED!!**

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**  
Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Thursday, June 18th - Sunday, June 21st  
Missouri School for the Deaf  
505 E 5th St, Fulton, MO

This 4-day camp is designed to enhance and improve leadership, self-advocacy skills, and employability for students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

- Residential camp at the Missouri School for the Deaf
- Open to students 16-21 with school recommendation

Participants do not need to know American Sign Language

Extended to April 3rd!  
Register by March 2nd  
[disability.mo.gov/gcd/LDPDHH.htm](https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/LDPDHH.htm)

For more information contact Rachel Rackers at 573-526-4564 or [rachel.rackers@oa.mo.gov](mailto:rachel.rackers@oa.mo.gov)

Don't Forget to Fill Out Your Application Before April 17th!

**MISSOURI YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM**

A FREE UNIQUE CAREER LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, AGES 16-21.

JULY 14-18, 2020  
AT UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI CAMPUS  
IN COLUMBIA

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE AT  
[HTTPS://DISABILITY.MO.GOV/GCD/YLF.HTM](https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/YLF.htm)

## Stress versus Anxiety

by Laura Mueth

When I give disability awareness presentations to groups I find that audience members often confuse stress and anxiety. Over the last few weeks I have heard the terms used interchangeably in reference to the current societal changes, but stress and anxiety are two different concepts.

So what is the difference between stress and anxiety? Stress is a physical, mental, or emotional trigger which causes tension in the body or mind. Anxiety is an overwhelming sense of fear and apprehension. Many individuals think they should always alleviate all anxiety. However, a small amount of anxiety can actually be beneficial at certain times such as prior to taking a test or giving a presentation because the small amount of anxiety often leads to better performance. So next time you have some anxiety try to use it to your advantage.

Ways to manage both stress and anxiety include maintaining a healthy lifestyle—eat healthy meals, get plenty of rest, exercise, and breathe. If you are experiencing significant stress or anxiety related to the current health situation, please visit our [COVID-19 resource webpage](https://disability.mo.gov/covid-19.htm) for helpful resource links at <https://disability.mo.gov/covid-19.htm>

### The Governor's Council on Disability has created a Web Page with COVID-19 Resources for Individuals with Disabilities

Please visit the page & share with others to get information on the Coronavirus situation!

<https://disability.mo.gov/covid-19.htm>

## Experiencing Disability Rights Legislative Day

by Samuel Andersen, MO-YLF Alum

My name is Sam Andersen, a high-school Senior in the Kansas City Metro area and an intern at The Whole Person. In this capacity, I attended my first Disability Rights Legislative Day on March 11<sup>th</sup> and I must say: it did not disappoint!

The Whole Person brought a busload of disability advocates up to the Capitol to meet with legislators and learn about pending legislation that affects our lives. Our merry little band of roughly 15 people (including a fellow alumnus from the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum) met with nearly a dozen legislators! Whether it was speaking about Restraint and Seclusion in schools (HB 1568), improving Medicaid so people can work without losing benefits (SB 629), or securing and increasing funding for Consumer Directed Services and Centers for Independent Living (HB 2010), our message was welcomed by all the legislators we met with.



On a personal note, I felt empowered by this opportunity to speak with legislators and share our personal experiences. As a wheelchair user trying to navigate the labyrinth that is my transition to adulthood, I've had many times when I felt all alone. Independence is difficult for anyone to achieve, especially with a disability. But this opportunity showed me that no one in the disability community is ever truly alone.

We as a disability community are powerful, for more reasons than one might think. Most notably, we are advocacy experts, because it's essential to our daily lives. But what people don't often see is that we stick up for one another. Our merry band of advocates went to the Capitol to advocate not only for ourselves, but for our thousands of brothers and sisters with various disabilities throughout Missouri. We also have great organizational support from Centers for Independent Living like The Whole Person, agencies like Vocational Rehabilitation, the Governor's Council on Disability, and countless others. And last Wednesday, I heard loud and clear that our elected officials have our backs too!

So, Disability Rights Legislative Day helped me grow as an advocate, but more importantly gave me hope. I now know that our legislators are willing to fight for us, to put in place the governmental support we need to lead independent lives. We just have to tell them what we need! So, thanks to the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council for hosting this great event, thanks to all the legislators that met with us, and thanks to all of you for being such amazing advocates! Let's go out and keep the momentum going!



## Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Members

- Yvonne Wright, Chair, New Bloomfield
- Joan Bergstrom, Ed. D, Lee's Summit
- Charles Comstock, Kirksville
- Betty Davidson, Ph.D., St. Louis
- Ronald Hack, St. Louis
- Chip Hailey, Joplin
- Rosemary Hendon, West Plains
- Katie Jones, St. Charles
- Kim Lackey, St. Louis
- Elijah Mayfield, Jefferson City
- DeAnna Noriega, Columbia
- Susan Orton, Creve Coeur
- Andrew Sartorius, Jefferson City
- Lesia Shelton, Buffalo
- Opeoluwa Sotonwa, Jefferson City
- James Trout, St. Louis
- Robert Wallace, St. Louis

## Missouri Governor's Council on Disability Staff Members

- Claudia Browner, Executive Director
- Laura Mueth, Disability Program Specialist
- Rachel Rackers, Disability Program Specialist
- Jessica Zimmer, Administrative Office Support Assistant

## ADA30 Celebration and Survey

by Claudia Browner

Planning for the 30th anniversary celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 28, 2020 at the Missouri State Capitol is still underway at this time.

Our survey is still open to gather input from Missouri citizens on the successes and accomplishments of the ADA and to share visions for an accessible, inclusive future for the next 30 years of the ADA.

**Please take a few minutes to participate in the [ADA30 survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KRKZ2K2) and share your thoughts. Please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KRKZ2K2>.**



## Virtual Travel Tips

by Claudia Browner

At a time when we are staying home and practicing social distancing, and students are learning online instead of being in the classroom, you may want to explore these great opportunities for virtual traveling.

Did you know you can visit many of the United States' National Parks using your computer? Visit [National Parks of the United States—Google Earth](https://www.google.com/earth/?hl=en) to check them out!

Have you ever wanted to visit the famous art museums around the world? Here's your chance to visit them online at [Google Arts and Culture](https://artsandculture.google.com/partner?hl=en) at <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner?hl=en>

Now, if you'll excuse me, I'll be heading to Arches National Park, and then the Museum of Modern Art.

## Calling All Artists

The Governor's Council on Disability is now accepting submissions for this year's **[Disability Employment Awareness Month Poster Contest](https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/postercontest/)**.

Start working on your posters now. Illustrate the importance of workplace inclusion through your artwork. How has the ADA affected your ability to work? Feel free to reference the 30th anniversary of the ADA in your artwork. Open to all Missouri residents.

For more information, visit <https://disability.mo.gov/gcd/postercontest/>



## Upcoming Events

- |                    |                                                                                |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • May 15, 2020     | Last Day of Legislative Session                                                |
| • June 18-21, 2020 | <a href="#">Leadership Development Program for Deaf/HH</a> , Fulton            |
| • June 23, 2020    | <a href="#">Missouri Mental Health Champions' Banquet</a> , Jefferson City     |
| • July 14-18, 2020 | <a href="#">Missouri Youth Leadership Forum</a> , Columbia                     |
| • July 28, 2020    | <a href="#">ADA30— Anniversary Celebration, State Capitol</a> , Jefferson City |